

**CAMBRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**Title:** *LAW ENFORCEMENT CANINE*

**Procedure:** 4.006

**Date Issued:**

**Revised:**

**PURPOSE:**

It is the purpose of this policy to provide guidelines for the management of the department's canine unit and use of police canines in field operations.

**POLICY:**

Because of a superior sense of smell and hearing and potential aggressiveness, the trained law enforcement canine is a valuable supplement to the police workforce. However, utilization of canines requires adherence to procedures that properly control their use of force potential and that channel their specialized capabilities into legally acceptable crime prevention and control activities.

**DEFINITION:**

Canine Team: An officer handler and his assigned police canine.

**PROCEDURES:**

***CANINE UNIT UTILIZATION***

1. Canine teams are available on a 24-hour, on-call basis to conduct building searches for offenders in hiding; assist in the arrest or prevent escape of serious or violent offenders; protect officers or others from death or serious injury; track suspects, or locate lost or missing persons, hidden instrumentalities or evidence of a crime; and detect the presence of concealed narcotics.

Canine teams should not be used to respond to minor complaints but may engage in assignments not listed here with the approval of the Supervisor.

2. Canine handlers are responsible for determining whether a situation justifies canine use and the appropriate tactical measures that should be taken. Police

canines may not be handled or given commands by anyone other than the assigned handler.

3. Officers shall request canine team assistance from the on duty supervisor through the communications center. Communications center personnel shall forward requisite information concerning the incident to the canine handler.

***UNIT QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING***

1. Applicants for the police canine unit must have:

At least two years of uniform patrol experience with satisfactory work performance, disciplinary and medical/sick leave records;

A willingness to remain with the unit for at least five years;

A willingness (together with other family members) to care for and house the canine at the officer's residence with a secure outdoor area for the canine;

A strong desire to work with canines and willingness to care for and train the animal; and

The ability to pass designated physical fitness and agility tests related to the tasks of canine handling.

2. The Chief of Police shall be responsible for selection of canine handlers.

3. All departmental canines must meet certification requirements. Untrained canines may not be used for canine duty.

4. New canine handlers must complete the prescribed canine training course and successfully meet all course requirements.

5. Canine handlers are required to demonstrate acquired abilities to the Chief of Police or his designee on a periodic basis.

**CANINE BITES AND INJURIES**

1. Use of specially trained police canines for law enforcement responsibilities constitutes a real or implied use of force. In this, as in other cases, officers may only use that degree of force that reasonably appears necessary to apprehend or secure a suspect as governed by the department's use of force policy. In all instances where a canine is deployed in a tactical situation, a written report shall be submitted to the on duty supervisor. Whenever a canine bites an individual, whether or not in the line-of duty, the handler shall:

Notify the on duty supervisor

Obtain medical treatment for the person;

Take color photographs of the affected area if possible prior to and following medical treatment; and

Submit a written report whenever it has been alleged that a canine has bitten or otherwise injured an individual. The report must detail the circumstances surrounding the incident, the identity of the individual involved and any witnesses, the extent of the injuries if known, and measures taken in response to the incident. The report shall be filed according to the department's use of force policy.

2. When a person has been bitten by a police dog, the police dog may continue to perform its duties for the peace officer or law enforcement agency and any period of observation of the police dog may be under the supervision of a peace officer. The supervision shall consist of the dog being locked in a kennel, performing its official duties in a police vehicle or remaining under the constant supervision of its police handler.

**BUILDING SEARCHES FOR SUSPECTS IN HIDING**

1. A primary use of departmental canines is for locating suspects in buildings or related structures where a search by officers would create an unnecessary risk. These searches shall be governed by the following:

Patrol officers shall secure the building perimeter.

Communications center personnel shall contact the building's owner to determine whether there may be tenants or others in the building and to ascertain the building's layout.

When a canine building search is anticipated, a preliminary search by officers should not be conducted as this will interfere with the canine's ability to discriminate scents.

The on-scene supervisor shall also take the following steps in preparation for the canine search:

Evacuate all tenants, workers or others from the facility.

Request that all air conditioning, heating or other air-blowing systems be shut off so as not to interfere with the canine's ability to discriminate scents.

The canine officer will confirm that the perimeter is secure before entering the building. Officers shall secure all exits and limit communications to those of a tactical nature.

The canine may be unleashed during a building search unless there is an imminent risk of injury to innocent persons within the facility. The canine may not be used to search facilities that contain substances potentially harmful to the animal unless overriding risk to human life is present.

Before starting the search, the handler or other officers shall loudly announce and repeat the statement that there are police officers on the premises and that a trained police canine will be released if the individual does not surrender. Officers shall allow a reasonable amount of time for the suspect to respond. Officers shall repeat the warning on each level of all multilevel structures.

When apprehending suspects in these or related circumstances, canines shall be commanded to disengage as soon as the suspect is subdued or readily complies with officer direction.

Officers may not transport arrestees in the same vehicle with a law enforcement canine unless alternative transportation is not available and immediate transport is essential for safety or security reasons.

#### ***CROWD CONTROL***

1. Canine teams may be present where large groups of people are gathering, however, canine teams shall not be used for crowd control at peaceful demonstrations.

2. Canine teams may be used for crowd control upon approval of a Staff Officer to protect life or property during a riot or other major unauthorized gathering that cannot be controlled by other means. In these situations, canines shall:

Be short leashed at all times unless no other means are available to protect an individual from serious injury; and

Not initiate any offensive action, unless to guard against imminent loss of life or serious bodily injury.

#### ***DRUG DETECTION***

1. Use of police canines in a drug detection capacity is authorized in the following situations and under the following conditions:

The canine handler shall maintain records that document the use and the proficiency of individual canines in drug detection. This documentation shall be readily available to canine officers and others who may need it when seeking warrants.

Random exploratory sniffing of luggage, packages or other inanimate objects may be conducted in public facilities such as airports, train stations, bus or marine terminals, as authorized by the Chief of Police or his designee.

Exploratory sniffing in these facilities shall be confined solely to those areas open to the general public and, whenever possible, with advance knowledge and consent of the appropriate facility manager.

Exploratory sniffing shall be conducted without interference or annoyance to the public or interruption of facility operations.

Canine sniffs conducted in areas restricted to the public, such as baggage staging areas, are considered searches and may be conducted only with reasonable suspicion or probable cause to believe that specific items contain illegal narcotics.

Field officers may detain specific checked luggage or related items for purposes of requesting a canine sniff if reasonable suspicion exists but may not detain the items so long as to interfere with the owner's scheduled travel.

When a drug detection canine alerts to luggage or related items, in this or other circumstances, a warrant or consent to search must be obtained before it is opened unless exigent circumstances exist to conduct an on-site search.

Sniffing of an individual's person is permitted in all circumstances only

when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the individual is in possession of illegal narcotics.

2. The use of drug detection canines in public schools is permitted only when:

The school's principal or designated authority requests or approves use of the canines;

There is reasonable suspicion to believe that illegal narcotics are being distributed and/or consumed on the premises such that the interests of the school are being unacceptably compromised; and

The search is limited to inanimate objects in public areas and the exterior of student lockers unless reasonable suspicion exists to gain admission to lockers and related areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

3. Sniffs of the exterior of homes -- either individual dwellings or the common areas of multiple unit dwellings -- may be permitted when:

The officer has probable cause to be on the property.

The owner has given consent.

A search warrant has been obtained.

4. Drug-sniffing canines may be used to sniff motor vehicles when:

Reasonable suspicion exists to believe the operator or passengers are in possession of illegal narcotics; or

During a valid vehicle stop, the canine is used to sniff the vehicle's exterior in an exploratory manner. Unless the canine alerts to the vehicle, the operator may not be detained longer than necessary to conclude the business associated with the initial stop.

persons or suspects, or to locate evidence that the Staff Officer has reason to believe has been abandoned or hidden in a specified open area. Such searches are subject to the following conditions and limitations:

When officers are pursuing suspects and contact with the suspect is lost, the officer, before summoning a canine team shall:

Stop and pinpoint the location where the suspect was last seen;

Shut off engines of vehicles in the area if possible; and

Avoid vehicle or foot movement in the area where the suspect or subject was last seen.

Canines used for tracking persons should remain on a leash of sufficient length to provide a reasonable measure of safety to the subject of the search without compromising the canine's tracking abilities.

Canine teams may only be used to locate small children when there is a reasonable suspicion of foul play or a belief that serious bodily harm or death will occur if the child is not located immediately. Where the use of a canine is deemed necessary, the canine officer shall explain the risks of attack to the subject to the parents or next of kin and their approval obtained to use the canine. If used to track a small child the canine will remain leashed.

Canine teams may not be used to apprehend anyone suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol if no other crime is involved, or the mentally disturbed if no crime is involved.

On-scene personnel shall:  
Secure the perimeter of the area to be searched;

**TRACKING**

1. Police canines are available with Staff Officer approval to track missing

Secure the integrity of the area to be searched by keeping all personnel out of the area; and

Protect all items of clothing that will be used for scent from being handled.

6. A canine handler may apply to take possession of his dog where:

The canine is retired from duty or relieved due to injury; or

The handler is transferred, promoted or retires and the chief of police decides not to retrain the canine for another handler.

**CANINE USE AND CARE**

1. Police canines shall not be used for breeding, participation in shows, field trials, exhibitions or other demonstrations, or for off-duty employment unless authorized by the Chief of Police or his designee.

2. Canine handlers are personally responsible for the daily care and feeding of their animal to include:

Maintenance and cleaning of the kennel and yard area where the canine is housed;

Provision of food, water and general diet maintenance as prescribed by the departmentally authorized veterinarian;

Grooming on a daily basis, or more often as required by weather, working conditions or other factors;

Daily exercise (police canines are not permitted to run at large unattended); and

General medical attention and maintenance of health care records.

3. Where the handler is unable to perform these and related duties due to illness, injury or leave, the canine may be housed in a departmentally approved kennel when the handler is unavailable.

4. Teasing or agitating a police canine is strictly prohibited unless performed as part of a training exercise.

5. Handlers shall not permit anyone to pet or hug their canine without their prior permission and immediate supervision. Should a civilian express a desire to do so, he should be informed that police canines are serious working dogs and that they can be dangerous if improperly approached.